

The Real Jonathan Byers by BigBadLittleRed

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

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Summary:

Steve wants to help Jonathan get a date for Prom, Jonathan doesn't want any part of this.

The Real Jonathan Byers

Author's Note:

(This was a prompt on Tumblr, you can check out my blog, I post a lot of Stonathan on there!<http://strangerthanjonathan.tumblr.com/post/159628808786/have-you-ever-seen-just-one-of-the-guys-one-of>)

“But I don’t want to go to Prom,” Jonathan complains from the bed as Steve digs in his closet for what he classifies as ‘cool clothes’.

“Of course you do, me and Nance are going therefore you have to go!” Steve exclaims, pulling an old gray polo from Jonathan’s closet and looking back at the younger like he’d personally offended him. “Do you still wear this?” He questions warily, Jonathan scowls at him.

“I didn’t ask for a course in fashion, Steve.” He snaps, Steve frowns and places the shirt back in the closet.

“How do you expect to get a date to Prom if you don’t at least look nice while asking her out?” Steve demands, Jonathan feels his face already begin to darken with a blush as his shoulders hunch up around his ears.

“I don’t need a date,” He mumbles, Steve sighs and returns to the bed, flopping down next to Jonathan and reaching up to take a lock of the younger’s hair between his fingers.

“Byers, I’m gonna teach you how to be cool.” Jonathan knows for a fact that he never wanted to hear those words, and he dreads the awful future they foreshadow.

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Steve had dragged him all the way over to his house for clothes, having deigned that none of his clothes were ‘cool’ enough. It was all bullshit in Jonathan’s eyes, but Steve wanted to play dress up and Jonathan didn’t really have the heart to turn him down.

“Okay, shoulders back.” Steve corrects with a rough maneuver of Jonathan’s posture by his hands. He can’t believe he actually allowed this to happen, he’d never worn clothes this tight before, he felt almost naked. His shirt and jeans hug at his slim form and the stupid jacket he’s wearing is a rather stylish black with lots of pockets that Steve had dug out from his closet. “You shouldn’t slouch so much; it makes you look like you aren’t confident.” He explains.

“But I’m not.” Jonathan argues, Steve rolls his eyes and gives him a look. “Fine, shoulders.” He twists his neck back and forth a little and tries to stand up as straight as possible; he can feel the faint blush still on his cheeks.

“Now walk in a straight line,” Steve steps back and leans up against his dresser, smiling brightly. Jonathan turns and walks across the carpet a few steps, rolling his eyes when Steve sighs loudly. “You walk like you’re trying to be quiet, confident guys don’t walk like that. Watch me,” He taps Jonathan on the shoulder and swaggers across the room in a ridiculous manner.

“You look like a douchebag; you don’t normally walk like that!” Jonathan objects with a wave of his hands, but Steve props his hands on his hips and glares him into submission. He imitates him a few times until the older boy deems him passable as cool.

“All right, now hair.”

Oh God.

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Everyone keeps staring at him, it’s a miserable experience, Jonathan feels exposed and on display. Just walking into school felt like stepping onto a red carpet, it was embarrassing and every time his head went down Steve would elbow him in the ribs.

“Eyes straight ahead, Jonny. You can’t see a person in this hallway unless it’s someone you want to talk to.” Steve tells him quietly, Jonathan sighs and tightens his grip on his backpack as they walk down the hall. He has the urge to run his fingers through his hair but he knows that they’d get covered in gel and it would mess up Steve’s careful work from this morning. ("I look like an idiot, Steve." "You look like me!" "That's what I said") This was all stupid, he didn’t want a date anyway, especially not one that liked this version of himself. It was a complete and total lie!

Jonathan spots Nancy and makes a beeline towards her, the girl shuts her locker and turns just as they approach. Her eyes scan over Jonathan like she didn’t see him and she opens her mouth as if to speak to Steve before she makes a startled noise and her eyes widen

and return to him.

“What did you do?” She gasps in horror, Jonathan grimaces just as Steve wraps his arm around Jonathan’s shoulders.

“I remade our little Jonny boy into a cool guy,” He grins brightly, Nancy just looks like she witnessed a car wreck and it makes Jonathan’s entire face burn with shame.

“Does it look bad?” Jonathan asks meekly, hand reaching up to touch his hair gingerly.

“Careful, Jonny, you’ll mess it up.” Steve scolds, catching his hand and lowering it again.

“Why exactly are you dressed like this?” Nancy asks, reaching out and grabbing the lapel of his jacket between two fingers with a small frown.

“Jonny is going to ask out a girl to Prom,” Steve explains, and Jonathan ducks his head a little.

“Who?” Nancy questions cautiously, Jonathan shrugs his shoulders.

“I think he’d be good with Rachel Stevens, or maybe Amy Jo.” Steve tells her with a sigh, Jonathan has the urge to wring Steve’s

neck at the sound of the whispers behind him.

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“Just go, man!” Steve pushes at his shoulder, Jonathan looks back at him with a scowl before stomping over to where Rachel stands with her friend. They smirk at the sight of him and he already wants to run, but he straightens his posture as he approaches and grips his backpack strap tight to center himself.

“Hi,” He greets gently, the girls look to one another before shrugging a little.

“Hey,” They return easily in unison, Jonathan glances away for a second before looking back at them.

“Rachel, w-well I was just wondering if you... I mean it’s cool if you do, but I mean... Do you have a date for Prom?” He questions, grimacing a little when her friend giggles.

“Listen, Jonathan. It’s really sweet and all that you’d ask me, but I’m just not interested.” The girl tells him, voice laced with pity. Jonathan nods his head quickly, glancing down at the floor before he spins around and scurries off down the hall. He practically races past Steve to avoid any questions and slips into the bathroom as soon as he sees the door.

He throws his bag down and tears the jacket off of him, feeling

like a complete idiot as he throws the jacket on the floor and stomps into a stall. He locks the door behind him and sinks down onto the toilet, dropping his face into his hands and biting back a sob. He didn't even want to go to Prom with stupid fucking Rachel or Amy or any other girl around here. Maybe he'd go with Nancy, but he wasn't even that into her anymore, he just wanted to be left alone.

The bathroom door squeaks open and Jonathan presses his hands tight to his face to keep from making too much noise. Tears smear onto his palms and colors burst behind his eyelids from the pressure on them.

"Jonny boy?" Steve, of course it was Steve. He takes in a deep breath but it sounds more like a sniffle, he releases his face just to speak clearly.

"Piss off, Steve." He hates the way his voice cracks with emotion and more tears spill from his eyes because of it. He wipes at them angrily with the backs of his hands and rests his arms down on his legs, ducking his head behind them as he hears Steve begin to slip under the stall door.

"Hey, c'mon, Rachel's not that great... I mean, there are a bunch of girls in Hawkins." Steve offers weakly, his hand brushing against Jonathan's arm.

"You don't get it, I don't want to go to stupid Prom or go on a date with a stupid girl I don't even like!" Jonathan says into his arms, angry tears burning behind his eyes as he presses them into his arms.

"I thought you just needed some confidence." Steve says quietly, Jonathan snuffles quietly and shakes his head. "You're not really a confidence guy, though, huh?" The older boy sighs before his jeans rustle against the tiles, his hands landing on Jonathan's shoulders. "Look at me, Jonny." He murmurs, Jonathan shakes his head against and curls into himself tighter.

"Just go away," His voice is muffled but he thinks it's loud enough for Steve to hear.

"I guess we both don't really get each other then. I'm not someone that goes away, ever." The older says with amusement, squeezing Jonathan's shoulders. "Look at me, man."

Jonathan picks his head up in the slightest, peering out at Steve with watery eyes. Steve takes him by the face and wipes under his eyes gently, offering him a small smile in truce. He lets go after a moment and reaches up to muss up Jonathan's perfectly coifed hair so it starts to fall back into its usual shape.

"If you don't want to be cool, that's all right with me." Steve says quietly, Jonathan wipes at his eye a little more and takes in a deep calming breath. "Honestly, I think I like the real Jonathan Byers more than the douchebag version." He murmurs sincerely, Jonathan smiles shakily at him.

"So where's the real Steve Harrington?" He taunts weakly, Steve scoffs and pulls him forward. Jonathan slips off of the toilet seat and onto his knees, his head falling against Steve's shoulder as the other teen hugs him tightly.

“I take it back; the real Jonathan Byers is a douchebag.” Steve mumbles with fake irritation, Jonathan smiles against his shoulder.

“I guess that’s why we’re friends,” He says quietly, and Steve nods against his shoulder.

“Guess so.” They release one another and fall back on opposite sides of the stall. It was dirty and gross and didn’t smell too great either, but Jonathan felt like he was safe in a little bubble with Steve in that moment. They wait until Jonathan’s face loses that pink splotchy color and his eyes don’t look so red, and Steve offers to switch jackets with him before they leave.

He feels tired all throughout first period but he rests his head in the crook of his arm and the smell of Steve’s cologne lets him doze easily. It’s worth Ms. Trager startling him awake with a ruler twenty minutes later.